

said, We sent them out in pairs of two. And then I asked, Well, then was it a good idea that the last inspection team of two was a unionized father-and-son team that went out there to carefully watch each other to make sure each other did the right thing? This is outrageous.

And then we had the investigation going on as to what gifts may have been given to the people doing the inspections.

This thing stinks, and it needs to be cleaned up.

THE PENTAGON BUDGET

(Mr. DEFAZIO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DEFAZIO. Today, the House will finally turn from naming sports teams' accomplishments to the Pentagon budget, a budget that's top heavy with more generals and admirals than we had at the height of World War II, a broken procurement system that's gold-plating dysfunctional weapon systems while our troops lack basics.

But, today, Congress will finally answer a question that is a puzzle perhaps only inside the Washington, DC beltway: How many engines does a single-engine jet fighter need? Now, where I come from it's pretty simple, the answer is one; but you've got to tune in later today to find out the judgment of Congress because some think you need two engines for a single-engine jet fighter. Hey, it will only cost another \$15 billion or \$20 billion.

CONTINUE FIGHTING FOR OUR VETERANS

(Mr. WILSON of Ohio asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WILSON of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, each Memorial Day Americans pause to remember the tremendous commitment and sacrifice made by our men and women in our Armed Forces. I'm proud that this Congress continues to honor our military by making veterans a top priority.

In the last 2 years, we have invested in our veterans health care and worked hard to improve the benefits available once they return home. For instance, we passed a new GI Bill so our troops have access to a quality education. We also increased the gas mileage reimbursement rate, which is important for our veterans in rural areas like mine.

I recently introduced another piece of legislation to help rural veterans, the Appalachian Veterans Outreach Improvement Act. This bill will improve access to services and benefits for veterans in Appalachia. With Memorial Day right around the corner, I ask my colleagues to join me in continuing to fight for our veterans.

BAN BP

(Mr. GUTIERREZ asked and was given permission to address the House

for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, this is from BP's Web site. It says: "Our code of conduct is the cornerstone of our commitment to integrity." And just what is the code of conduct? The code of conduct is: "We aim for no accidents, no harm to people, and no damage to the environment." This is from their Web site. Well, BP is zero for three.

So I ask everyone, Where is the integrity if they don't even meet their own guidelines? This has been the worst ecological disaster, and we know that they don't have solutions ready when a disaster occurs.

Now, under our purchasing agreements, we have to have a satisfactory record of integrity and business ethics when we grant someone a contract. So today I have an amendment to end the \$2 billion that we purchase each and every year with taxpayer dollars from BP for our department. Let's disbar them because they should be banned permanently.

EXTENDING UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE BENEFITS: THE COST OF INACTION FOR DISABLED WORKERS

(Mrs. MALONEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, the Joint Economic Committee released a report this week which shows the staggering cost to the government of failing to extend unemployment benefits. The report focuses on unemployed disabled workers.

By the end of 2010, the JEC estimates that 290,000 unemployed disabled workers will exhaust their unemployment benefits. Without extension of unemployment benefits, the JEC estimates that two-thirds of these workers will leave the labor force and move on to Social Security disability insurance. Shifting these workers from the labor market and onto the SSDI rolls—the cost of inaction—is a \$24.2 billion lifetime cost.

By contrast, extending unemployment insurance benefits and COBRA premium benefits is \$721 million in 2010. Not only is an extension of unemployment benefits the morally right thing to do; it is fiscally responsible, saving the government over \$23 billion.

WE MUST DO MORE FOR OUR VETERANS

(Mr. HIMES asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speaker, in my 16 months in Congress, the most challenging thing I have had to do has not had to do with energy or health care or our economy. The hardest thing I have had to do has been to stand in front of 700 Connecticut National Guard troops

who are deploying to Afghanistan, 18, 19, 20, 21 years old, young people who had raised their hand and said, I will serve my country. I will die for you and for your freedoms. And I thought, how can we thank a young person who will say that and who will do that? The answer is we can't, we can't possibly. But we can thank them through our actions. We can do what we did in passing the GI Bill to provide college education to our troops, to give businesses a \$2,400 tax credit for hiring unemployment veterans, providing nearly 2 million disabled veterans with a \$250 economic recovery payment.

I am proud of what this House has done for our veterans in the last 16 months and, as we approach Memorial Day, remind my colleagues of the need to do more for those who say that they will sacrifice for us.

MEDICARE REIMBURSEMENT

(Ms. BERKLEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. BERKLEY. Mr. Speaker, the time has come for this Congress to come to grips with the serious crisis in our health care system, the reimbursement of our doctors for treating our Medicare patients. Unless we act, there will be a 21 percent cut in Medicare reimbursement to those doctors that treat our senior citizens.

We are in danger of creating a situation that may very well cause the collapse of our Medicare system. I favor a permanent fix; that's what we promised the doctors. We are now considering a 19-month fix. I'm not happy with it; I'm going to support it. Let everybody in this House vote for that Medicare reimbursement fix for the doctors so they can continue to treat senior citizens until we figure out a way of permanently fixing this discrepancy.

Unless we're prepared to go to medical school and go back home to our districts to treat our senior citizens, we better make sure that our doctors get adequately reimbursed so this system will continue.

□ 1030

A TRIBUTE TO RAYMOND H. RATHMELL

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, this spring, in a small town in my district called Renovo, the Bucktail Area Junior/Senior High School dedicated its campus to another educational institution: Raymond H. Rathmell.

Mr. Rathmell was involved with the school for 42 years, first as a teacher, as assistant principal and then as principal. There are countless students and